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RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 9942
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 5840
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 5148
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2668
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2701
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SUBJECT: SECURITY UPDATE: NORMAL CALM IN KENYA

REF: A. 07 NAIROBI 1603
IB. 06 NAIROBI 5393

I1. (SBU) Summary. The security situation in Kenya is normal calm, and there have been no reports of election-related violence since well before the February 28th power-sharing agreement reached between President Kibaki and Raila Odinga. On March 4, media reported violence in Kenya's Mt. Elgon area, but this is the sad continuation of localized fighting that has killed over 150 people since 2006. It bears no relation to the more recent post-electoral civil unrest. End summary.

I2. (SBU) The security situation in Kenya has returned to a state of normal calm since the signing of a power sharing agreement between President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga on February 28. There have been no reports of election-related violence and road traffic is moving freely in all areas. Nairobi remains a critical threat post for crime, however.

I3. (SBU) On March 4, media reported violence in Kenya's Mt. Elgon area, where a local militia killed 12 civilians on March 3. Since 1996 alone, over 150 people have died in fighting between the Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) militia and local police. The violence of March 3 was another sad chapter in this conflict (see ref A), whose origins lie in ethnic animosities over access and ownership of land in the Mt. Elgon region. Government forces are actively pursuing militia members, including a ground-to-air operation and deployment of a special unit to back up regular and Administration Police.

I4. (SBU) Comment: The March 3 violence in the Mt. Elgon region should be seen in the context of land disputes that far pre-date the civil unrest that followed the disputed December 27 election. Violence related to the latter has evaporated entirely, and with the two rival political camps collaborating to produce and pass next week the legislation needed to codify their power sharing agreement, we are not at this time anticipating any new unrest or instability stemming from the post-electoral political crisis. End comment.

RANNEBERGER